LF, JW

PH (JNS,HR), The Watergate Caper (and the avuncular carbuncle) 8/1/72

While this is a memo, I address it in particular to you because of your recent comments about what you described as "craziness". In turn, I described that as unthinking, and if I didn't go farthur, I am now surprized.

Recently I have gotten more than the usual flak about my lack of temperance in some of my approaches. In many instances this would be an accurate description of some of my letters. Very recently I've addressed the time-and-place philosophy of Ecclesiastes in this context, if not to all of you. Much of it has to do with what one to whom no carbon choses to define as a special press antagonism to me and for these reasons. It is fiction. That I have addressed some of the potentates in ways they do not find welcome does get their attention, if they evade in response, and with policy determinations controlling, they have become (indeed began) impervious to fact. Presently there is working an example of this for which I will not now take time.

This peroration/introduction has an avuncular purpose. Aside from my own recollections of my own reactions and attitudes when I was your ages, I have specific objections over the years to what is, when expressed with most moderation, called an avuncular attitude.

You are what may be in part or all of the next wave of the research in which we are all engaged. You are also the product of the most corrupt society we have ever had and the most repressive educational system we have ever suffered. It takes enormous effort to escape the cliches of this training, the usual end product of which is minds that work with the individuality of gut-stuffed sausages. I would hope that you are able to escape this captivity in your thinking and approaches, as some of you in some instances have remarkably well and as others are unwilling to evenconsider.

Unless I became aware of your interest in The Watergate Caper late, you know that I pressed upon the Post (whose negative policy attitude toward me is well-known and long-standing) and upon the emocrats the need of investigating official Republican expenses, and I referred to my own early use of such files, in the mid-and late thirties.

It is not in the edition of the Post that we get, but local radio and at least CBS net radio news on a larger scale and to a larger audience quote a Post story of today tracing $25,000 of official Republican campaign money to Barker. This may have been entirely independent of my work, but when the Post had in all this time not done precisely that and when it was done after my suggestion, I can't assume that my suggestion was not considered. Because I don't now have the story (and may not get it) I can t send copies.

But there is a point I'd like you to consider, and that in the context of the Post's policy attitude toward me, so firmly enforced in the past that it killed legitimate news stories and refused to write others, and that is that one must be persistent if one has really serious purposes. One must not be deterred by rebuff or policy determinations. And one must use unorthodox approaches from time to time, unorthodox methods, too. There are things not taught. There are things taught that should not be. This can be an intellectual prison.

Incidently, I heard the first of these broadcasts when I was walking this a.m., so I had time to think of it. In reporters alone I brief five on this, with the same suggestion. If the Post did heed my suggestion, this means I wasted the time spent on four. I think if one has genuine concern for the integrity of society on this particular caper, it is relevant to ask if the seemingly wasted time was well spent. I think it may well have been.

You don't have to agree with me, but I do wish you'd find time to think about this and the frequent utility of the forceful method of getting attention. I do not dispute that it can be counter-productive, but my files will show that in every case where I was able to accomplish something that in my opinion is major, it never happened in response to a polite opening and in every case followed some rather forceful expressions.

Sincerely,